

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LUSAKA 01000 150954Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5419
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T LUSAKA 1000

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR ZA RH UK
SUBJ: ZAMBIA MAY BE SELLING POWER TO RHODESIA

1. THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION HAS SHARED WITH US SOME SENSITIVE INFORMATION WHICH IT HAS RECENTLY DEVELOPED ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF POWER GENERATED AT KARIBA.

2. UNTIL RECENTLY ZAMBIA RECEIVED POWER GENERATED ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE KARIBA DAM IN RHODESIA. THE POWER WAS USED LARGELY TO OPERATE THE MINES IN THE COPPERBELT. IN MAY OF LAST YEAR THE TURBINES ON THE NORTH SHORE STATION FINANCED BY THE WORLD BANK CAME INTO OPERATION AND ZAMBIA SUDDENLY FOUND ITSELF WITH A POWER SURPLUS. SINCE THEN IT HAS AGREED TO SUPPLY RHODESIA WITH POWER DURING PEAK PERIODS. IT'S CHARGE IS HIGH--A REPORTED 50 CENTS U.S. PER UNIT. BUT IT IS THE ONLY PLACE WHERE RHODESIA CAN SUPPLEMENT ITS POWER NEEDS UP TO WHAT IS UNDERSTOOD TO BE A 300 MEGAWATT SURGE LIMIT. PAYMENTS FOR THE POWER TRANSFERRED TO RHODESIA ARE MADE TO A NEW YORK BANK. THEY ARE RUNNING AT A RATE OF ABOUT 7.5 MILLION DOLLARS PER ANNUM.

3. THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS INFORMATION FROM THE BRITISH POINT OF VIEW IS ITS POTENTIAL HAS A COUNTER ARGUMENT IF THEY ARE PRESSED TOO FAR IN DEFENSE OF WESTERN OIL COMPANIES ACCUSED

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OF SUPPLYING OIL TO RHODESIA IN VIOLATION OF U.N. SANCTIONS. IT IS THE EMBASSY'S UNDERSTANDING THAT THE CENTRAL AFRICAN POWER COMMISSION AS A REGIONAL ORGANIZATION WAS SPECIFICALLY EXEMPTED BY THE U.N. FROM APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS. THEREFORE ZAMBIA WOULD NOT TECHNICALLY BE VIOLATING U.N. SANCTIONS THROUGH THE TRANSFER OF POWER TO RHODESIA. NEVERTHELESS A CONSISTENT PATTERN OF TRANSFER TO RHODESIA OF LARGE QUANTITIES OF ENERGY

IN RETURN FOR MONETARY RECOMPENSE WHICH RESULTED IN PROVIDING
A BADLY NEEDED SOURCE OF ENERGY IN SUPPORT OF RHODESIA'S
WAR EFFORT WOULD CERTAINLY DAMAGE ZAMBIA'S MORAL POSITION
IF IT BECAME KNOWN PUBLICLY.

4. THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS HIGHLY SENSITIVE AND HAS ONLY
RECENTLY BEEN DEVELOPED BY THE BRITISH. FURTHER CONFIRMATION
AND DETAIL IS NEEDED. THEY HAVE NOT DECIDED TO USE IT IN ANY
FORM YET AND WOULD BE DISTRESSED BY ANY LEAK OF THE INFORMATION.
IT SHOULD, THEREFORE, BE CAREFULLY GUARDED FOR THE TIME BEING.
LOW

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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